

FIRST SOVIET EXPERIMENT

Rothstein's behavior, cunning and arrogant, and his unceasing intrigue against the existing system in Iran, provoked incidents with the Iranian government. It was with a sigh of relief that the Iranians heard of his recall, after a year and a half in Teheran, by Moscow.

His successor, Boris Shumiatsky, although of different temperament, did not discontinue Rothstein's activities. This unceasing propaganda, partly directed against Iranian institutions, but mainly against British imperialism, eventually caused Lord Curzon, British Foreign Secretary, to make a vigorous protest in Moscow. On May 2, 1923, a ten-day ultimatum was addressed by the British government to Russia. Its main theme was the anti-British activities of Soviet agents in Iran, Afghanistan, and India. Raskolnikov, who by that time had become Soviet Minister in Afghanistan, and Shumiatsky in Teheran were the particular targets of British bad temper. The ultimatum contained texts of the dispatches that these two men were sending to Moscow. Raskolnikov was accused of fomenting trouble in the Northwestern Frontier Province of India and his communication to the Soviet government asking for three thousand rubles and ten boxes of cartridges to aid the rebellious elements in Waziristan was quoted in extenso. As to Shumiatsky, the note said: "The Government of His Majesty knows exactly the sums that the Russian Government sent him from time to time and which were in great part destined to foment anti-British intrigues. . . ." Then Curzon quoted the following dispatch of Shumiatsky sent in February, 1923, to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs:

Our mission, in putting into practice the instructions

indicated in your telegram, has decided to follow those political directives especially in northern Persia and in Teheran. There has been organized a good group of propagandists who will be able to develop a really effective anti-British action. If the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs approve the program of the mission, it will be necessary to have for the initial expenses 300,000 tomans . . . of credit to begin the work.²¹

An impressive number of other documents proving Soviet smuggling
see *British Blue Book: A Selection of Papers Dealing with the Relations between His Majesty's Government and the Soviet Government, 1921-1927* (London, 1927), Cmd 2895.